

# The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance





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he Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance” is a multifaceted program—public panels and dance demonstrations, this booklet with its essays by distinguished scholars and a photographic exhibition on the history of American modern dance. Naturally, many people have been involved in making the idea a reality and have given generously of their ideas, knowledge, patience and time. In particular, we thank the Dance Collection of The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center (Genevieve Oswald, Curator) for their generous assistance and cooperation, the Museum of the City of New York and the many photographers who generously contributed their photos so that we could tell the story of the remarkable history of American modern dance. We are most grateful to the exhibition designer, Don Vlack, and to the Duke University Art Museum (John R. Spencer, Director). A special appreciation goes to Monica Mosely of the Dance Collection for her invaluable assistance, kindness and humor.

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Gerald Myers and Stephanie K. Reinhart,  
Project Directors

#### Photographs listed in order of appearance:

Ruth St. Denis (cover illustration from *The Dance* magazine)

Uday Shankar with Unknown Woman.\*

Uday Shankar. Photo: Courtesy of a Private Collection.

Uday Shankar. Photo: Lipnitzki.\*

A Scarf Dance performed by women of the Southern Philippines in the Muslim region in Mindanao. Photo: Courtesy of Ballet Philippines.

An Ifugao Dance by women of the mountain province in Northern Luzon. Photo: Courtesy of Ballet Philippines.

A Kalinga Celebration Dance from the mountain province of Northern Luzon. Photo: Courtesy of Ballet Philippines.

Siobhan Davies’ “The Dancing Department” — London Contemporary Dance Theatre (1983). Photo: David Buckland.

Robert Cohan’s “Song, Lamentations and Praises” — London Contemporary Dance Theatre (1979). Photo: Anthony Crickmay.

Ted Shawn’s “Dance of the Dynamo”.\*

Early American Modern Dancers, circa 1930. Photo: Courtesy of American Dance Festival Archives.

A Balinese Monkey Dance. Photo: Claire Holt Collection.\*

A Balinese Dance, circa 1938. Photo: Claire Holt Collection.\*

Helen Tamiris in “Prelude to Swing” from “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”.\*

Ted Shawn’s “The Kinetic Molpai”. Photo by Shapiro.

Katherine Dunham with Roger Ohardieno in “Barrel House”.\*

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# The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance

## American Dance Festival 1984 50th Anniversary Program

### C ontents

Acknowledgements and Special Thanks

Photography Credits

Foreword Dr. Gerald Myers

*Dance in India: The Recent Past and the Contemporary Period* Clifford Reis Jones

*Contemporary Dance in the Philippines* Ricardo D. Trimillos

*Modern/Contemporary Dance in Britain Today* Patrick O'Meara with Robin Howard

*Dance and American Life: The Progressive Years* Neil Harris

*Tradition and Innovation in Indonesian Dance* Tilman Seebass

*ADF 50th Anniversary Photographic Exhibition: "Made In America—Modern Dance Then and Now"* Suzanne Shelton

Bibliography

Scholars' Biographies

Performers' Biographies

American Dance Festival Board of Directors and Staff

Association for the American Dance Festival Board of Directors

American Dance Festival History

Schedule

**Charles L. Reinhart**, Director  
**Martha Myers**, Dean  
**Gerald Myers**  
**and Stephanie K. Reinhart**, Project Directors

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# A Humanities-and-Dance Program of the American Dance Festival's 50th Anniversary Season

Gerald Myers

**T**he American Dance Festival was founded in 1934, when a group of choreographers and dancers, now called the second generation of modern dance pioneers and the successors of Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn, moved their summer quarters from New York City to Bennington, Vermont. This group, led by Martha Hill, included Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, Charles Weidman, and Doris Humphrey. These great artists began the Festival as a summer collaboration of teaching, experimenting, and creating modern dance classics.

Since then, the American Dance Festival has developed into a permanent home and sponsor of modern dance, so the history of American modern dance is intimately intertwined with that of the Festival. During its fifty years the Festival has become an institution devoted to preserving the traditions of modern dance and to supporting the modifications of those traditions made by successive generations of choreographers. It continues to function as a training ground and as a showcase for emerging talent in modern dance.

Aiding and abetting modern dance to flourish as an art form, which is the Festival's main reason for being, is a complex enterprise. It includes—for special notice here—an ongoing interest not only in presenting modern dance but also in *interpreting* it. What is modern dance? Seeking answers to this and related questions is an interpretive inquiry that the Festival has encouraged and supported as one of its functions.

Over the years the Festival has been a place where writers on dance, such as Susanne Langer, have been able to meet and talk with dancers and choreographers. Where art is, so is criticism. Respecting this, the Festival organizes an annual critics' conference, and here younger writers are assisted in developing their skills by established dance critics. It is not only modern dance but all forms of dance that are explored by the critics, and this is true of the Festival's recent Humanities-and-Dance programs as well.

The Humanities-and-Dance programs, commencing in the late 1970's and made possible by the generous support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the North Carolina Humanities Committee, and the Rockefeller Foundation, have focused on the "humanistic" dimensions of dance. Such dimensions make dance something more than simply entertainment or recreation, something more than simply physical technique. Human beings have always danced, and the reasons for this include but extend beyond fun and games.

What those reasons might be is an interest of the Humanities, including such disciplines as history, philosophy, religion, literature, sociology, cultural anthropology, and the history and criticism of the arts. The Festival's Humanities-and-Dance programs have been inter-disciplinary explorations, involving representatives of the various disciplines constituting the Humanities, of the ways in which dance has served the human being—personally, socially, and spiritually. These programs have been designed for public audiences, being part of the Festival's efforts to achieve an ever increasing awareness of the multiple sources of dance appreciation.

A series of programs on "Dance, Culture and Humanities" and "Dances and Their People" has been presented to the public during the past several summers. The participating scholars, with the assistance of

dancers illustrating their discussions, have shown how dance is a window on culture, how it provides insights into the life and times of a society or civilization. Primitive, ritualistic, and folk dances have long been a source of information about the work habits, daily routines and the beliefs and values of the cultures to which they belonged, and this was illustrated, in the case of Native American traditions, by a tribal dance group from North Carolina with interpretations by Jamake Highwater. Another North Carolina group, the Asheville Cloggers, with the benefit of sociological and anthropological commentaries, showed how their dancing and music preserve modes of emotional expression from an Anglo-Saxon heritage.

"Dances and Their People" looked at other dance styles and their cultural origins, including Afro-American, Japanese, French, and Spanish. Scholars representing the Humanities examined these for determining how they reveal cultural traits, including social class distinctions, gender distinctions and sexual relationships, attitudes towards nature, and religious beliefs and practices. Whether these dance styles were strictly formalized and rule-governed or, to the contrary, were allowed freedom and spontaneity in their performance was a subject for discussion.

What is dance? What is its uniqueness among the arts? The Humanities-and-Dance programs raised these questions for interdisciplinary dialogues. One summer series treated them from the perspectives of aesthetics and dance criticism. Philosophers, critics, and dancers compared answers to such questions and related issues, and the proceedings were published as *Philosophical Essays on Dance* (ed. by Dr. Gerald Myers and Gordon Fancher, published by Dance Horizons). Another summer series sought a closer understanding of the art of dance by bringing choreographers into discussions with scholars from the Humanities. Historian Neil Harris collaborated with Bella Lewitzky, as did writer Benjamin De Mott with Alwin Nikolais for that purpose. In another instance, the unusual concentration on dance was transferred to the arts in general, so that alleged connections between art and morality could be investigated. The participating scholars were William Bennett, Joel Fleishman, and Hilton Kramer.

These, briefly sketched, are the Humanities-and-Dance programs that have led to a highlight of the American Dance Festival's 50th Anniversary Season, "The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance". It is fitting that, after exploring the aesthetic and cultural significance of traditional and ethnic dance styles, the Festival should focus scholarly attention on what has been its own main interest, namely, modern dance. Perhaps more than ever before, modern dance is today a phenomenon whose humanistic dimensions deserve inquiry by representatives of the Humanities.

It is in the nature of modern dance to be continuously experimental and innovative. Since its original assertion of independence from ballet and other traditional dance styles, by inventing movement, music, costumes and props for its own purposes, it has prospered as a relentlessly rebellious art form. Whether the choreographer be Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, or Twyla Tharp, in each instance the dances are, for genius and inventiveness, on the artistic frontier.

A striking fact of today is how the spirit of American modern dance has spread around the globe.

Charles and Stephanie Reinhart, the Festival's Directors, have recognized this during their recent "dance searches" in other lands. After bringing examples of traditional dances from such places as China, Japan, India and Indonesia, they have now invited foreign dancers and companies which show the influence of modern dance concepts. As is well known, the art of dance has fairly exploded in its growth during the past two decades, and an aspect of this seems to have been the transmission of the impulses of modern dance around the world.

When the fashion, say, of genre painting is replaced by abstract expressionism, we ask, what does it mean? Likewise, when Pinter displaces O'Neill on stage, or Roth displaces Hemingway in the novel, or Debussy gives way to Stravinsky in music halls—we ask, What does it mean? As we do also when operas get sung in English and "break dancing" cavorts from streets into the theatres. What does it mean?, we ask,

when the idols of musical television no longer look like males or females but like some neutral compromise between the two.

The birth and growth of modern dance also provoke the query, What does it mean? Modern dance performed its first jumps and turns in America. Why in America? For many, including other artists, it displaced ballet and musical comedy as America's most creative form of dance. What does that mean? Since the second World War, the development of modern dance has been world-wide. What does this tell us about American artistic influence abroad, about the artistic scene in other cultures? These and related questions become the responsibility of the scholars and the dancers participating in "The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance", the Humanities-and-Dance project that helps to celebrate the Festival's 50th Anniversary season.





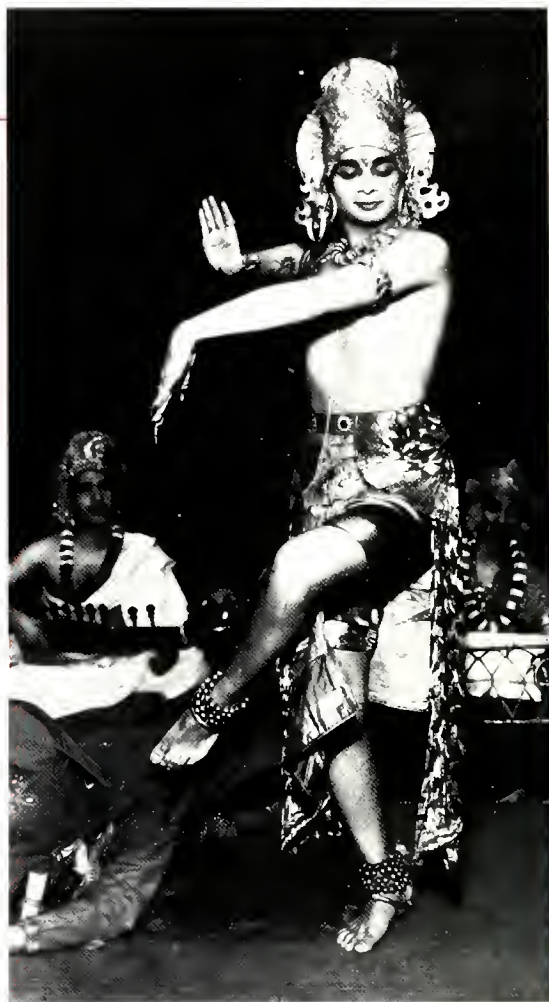
# Dance in India: The Recent Past and the Contemporary Record

Clifford Reis Jones

**T**he spectrum of dance in India ranges from the most orthodox and exclusive, ritually functional types of dance, representing an integral part of the religion and expressing complex cultural strata of the Hindu tradition, to the latest attempts at "cultural shows" in the supper club or night club context of luxury hotels dedicated to the international tourist trade. It is probably safe to say that all these forms of dance have been and are being touched by elements of the contemporary world. In India even the most traditional actor-dancers and musicians go to the cinema. There is scarcely a village without at least a palm-thatched hall that shows films on weekends. Even in highly traditional forms of dance and theatre, modern products of plastic and other synthetics are fast replacing older indigenous fabrics and ornaments. The rapid changes in patronage and in the socioeconomic base of traditional theatre are a continuing process. All of this represents an immensely complex phenomenon. Obviously, we must simplify to an extent our approach to this vast and complicated subject. We must omit a great deal and seek those threads of the pattern which will clarify the continuing process of change and further our understanding.

**A** brief glance at India's past, insofar as traditional forms of dance are concerned, will help to clarify the present. A glance at even the fairly recent past, of the last fifty years or so, will indicate that the "great antiquity" of India's dance forms, and their "close relationship" with the *Bharata Nāṭyaśāstra* have been constantly reiterated. The *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the earliest and most voluminous of the extant Sanskrit texts on dramaturgy, has been variously dated from the 2nd century B.C. to the 3rd century A.D. In fact, it is a compiled work and it seems reasonable to believe that its various parts are from various periods. In any case, dance is discussed in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* only as a part of drama. Although many theoretical concepts propounded in the *Śāstra* do indeed apply to dance as well as to drama, and although many of these are as valid today as in the past, it is still far-fetched to propose anything like a one-to-one correspondence between the text of the *Śāstra* and any form of dance existing today. We can more reasonably say that very few classical dance traditions in India can be documented historically to a period much earlier than the 18th century, even though their roots may be from an earlier period. A very few forms, such as the only surviving form of traditional Sanskrit drama, called *Kūṭiyāṭṭam*, can point to a fairly clear documentation through literary and inscriptional sources that reaches back to the late 9th century, with indications that it can perhaps be extended to the 7th century A.D. This, however, is rare. In any case, the important point with reference to these traditional forms, whatever their claims to antiquity, is that most of these arts employing dance and choreographed movement techniques have changed almost continuously over the centuries. Even the most traditional dance genres are being constantly transformed within their respective techniques and structures. However, in the past these changes came about generally from within the tradition. It is only in the recent past that accelerated change began to take place as a result of outside influence—meaning outside the tradition itself—change wrought not by the traditional (and often hereditary) artists, but by others and for reasons often unrelated to the aesthetic and artistic *raison d'être* of the form in question.

**S**etting aside questions of historical antiquity and addressing ourselves to developments from the period of the 1920's and 1930's, we can begin to grasp the situation as it exists today. During that period India was searching for her identity, both in the political and in the cultural sense. Many educators and scholars, concerned with both the freedom movement and with Indian cultural identity, were interested in the performing arts as an integral part of the education and evolution of a new free India. They sought to re-establish an Indian identity in art and culture to counteract the long dominance of European supremacist attitudes, which had for various reasons been widely accepted by upper- and middle-class Indian urban society. There were movements in several parts of India at this time to search out, "rediscover," and



revive the traditional dance art forms of the classical past. Institutions sprang up in various regions, both in the cities and in the rural areas. Some unfortunately were the efforts of dilettantes and oftentimes overzealous intellectuals with a "culture consciousness" but with too little practical knowledge of either traditional Indian performing arts or European performing arts. Others, such as Kalakshetra in Madras, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Bombay, or Kerala Kalamandalam in rural Kerala, were very important to the survival and development of India's performing traditions.

**T**agore can perhaps be singled out as the greatest innovator of the period. His several tours of Europe and particularly of Southeast Asia gave impetus to his vision of the re-establishment of an Indian identity in the arts. Tagore felt the need for developing a fuller curriculum in the arts at the then new Vishvabharati University at Shantiniketan. Respectable middle-class society had rejected dance as a fitting subject for education on the basis of the stigma associating it with low-class professionals and prostitutes. This was perhaps the first time in the modern period that evolving Indian society and its reformers were to grapple with the problem of the dance arts, which in the past era had been in various degrees languishing in the hands of a virtually dispossessed professional class. Tagore contributed greatly to the renaissance of traditional art and dance and their re-establishment in the newly evolving society to a place of acceptance and respectability. His first major step was to establish dance as a regular part of education at Vishvabharati University. His success was perhaps due to several factors. First, he had chosen Manipuri dance, a dance form which had no connection with the class of professional courtesans, but was closely associated with the temple. It was also geographically from outside the cultural context of Bengal and urban North India. In addition, the Manipuri form was culturally connected with Bengal via its Vaiṣṇava religious influences. Other factors may have been that the costume was brilliant and also decorous, and that the quality of movement probably appealed immediately to the romantic nature of the Bengali public. From his success with introducing Manipuri dance, and eventually other forms, to Vishvabharati University as a

part of the curriculum, Tagore proceeded to create dances and dance-dramas. His interest in the dance, principally in the dance of Manipur and also in certain regional Bengali folk forms, provided the raw material for his newly created dance and music tradition; this was the beginning of a pattern which spread over all India. Many theatre arts groups, experimenting with performance techniques for political and cultural expression, a large part of which involved personal creativity, provided further urban echoes of Tagore's first experiments with a "new Indian dance." This pattern is still in evidence today.

We must also acknowledge the singular importance of Uday Shankar at this period. His contacts with European dance theatre, and particularly with the internationally famous Anna Pavlova, had a lasting effect upon his later work. He was the first and most successful innovator in terms of re-created traditional dance. He was without question the creator of a contemporary choreographic style and method that was both Indian and of international artistic significance. A great many of the developments in contemporary urban-centered dance and dance-drama production in the years since Shankar have been attempts to imitate the formulae of this great innovator of the 1930's and 1940's. Few of his students or imitators have reached the levels of imagination, creativity and theatrical taste that were the hallmarks of Uday Shankar's original works.

An important source of stimulus in the evolution of contemporary Indian dance was the contact between Western and Asian dancers. American performers such as Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, touring India circa 1928, were not only a stimulating influence, but were themselves stimulated by Indian concepts of movement. Later contacts in the 1950's and 60's with American modern dancers such as Martha Graham, and the presence of several dancers and dance educators lecturing, performing, researching, studying, as part of State Department programs or the Fulbright Program, also exerted a strong influence. Many contacts with European and American contemporary dance were made through scholars engaged in field research in India and supported by the Ford Foundation, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the JDR 3rd Fund, or other institutions. In addition, Indian students were sent abroad to study in the United States, England, and the Soviet Union.

In the last twenty years we have seen many transformations of the dance scene in India. The almost frantic period of the late 50's and early 60's saw the "new discoveries," the re-created "Odissi" of Orissa State, and a revival of the nearly forgotten Mohiniyattam of Kerala, both of which are solo female dance forms. Then Sattriya of Assam State and Kuchipudi Bhāgavata Mēla Nāṭakam, both dance-drama forms performed by male ensembles, became source material for solo excerpts by young female concert artists who competed in the major urban areas for national acclaim. A grand coup was to compose a "dance ballet" in one of these styles. The highest mark of achievement was to be chosen to take these choreographic creations or re-creations abroad as part of official cultural delegations.

In a few instances attempts were made to depart from the universal Indian themes derived from the epics and *purāṇas*, and to adapt unusual thematic material. Dramatic themes were drawn from Christian, Persian, or Buddhist sources, or from the Vedas. The "new" plots were sometimes interpreted in terms of an established traditional technique or more daringly in a combination of traditional techniques. Occasionally the choreographer sought for a new contemporary concept of movement expression, these last rare and atypical experiments coming closest to the internationalized dance format of what we would recognize as Euro-American modern dance. None of these particular experiments seem however to have been indications of a continuing trend; they generally met with limited success.

The effect of the ethnic cultural excitement and international success at commercial, political and social levels of a

few major pioneers in India's arts, combined with the movement to reclaim a cultural heritage and preserve the verities of a rich creative past on the one hand, and on the other to create, to express new ideas in a new and changing India, produced a variety of both positive and negative results, the echoes of which have continued into the present. In general, the level of technical excellence, artistic creativity and authenticity steadily rose through the years in spite of not always prudent editing and rearranging or inventing anew. Although many works were created largely for international export with a non-Indian audience's imagined standards and taste in mind, the experience and education of both the performers and national and international audiences grew and matured. Occasionally performing artists have ignored traditional forms of presentation, and irresponsible eclecticism as well as blatant misrepresentations of traditional dance forms have on occasion been put forward under the misunderstood concept of "showmanship," a word that in the 60's and 70's was becoming a part of the Indian dancer's vocabulary. Such instances have fortunately been rare.

At the hands of a Martha Graham or an Uday Shankar, the artistic maturity of East and West learning successfully from each other is self-evident. There is undoubtedly going to be a continuing, perhaps increasing, fascination with the possibilities of "East-West fusion"; experiments in dance have been taking place, and also in dramatic theatre pieces. Some East-West experiments have drawn upon the traditional Indian concept of theatre, resulting in plays in which the spoken word, dance movement, music and visual representation are integrated. In the larger context, we find East-West design in architecture, high fashion, landscape, crafts, etc. A growing intellectual maturity will have of necessity to guide these movements. This is crucial, or they will soon subside, after exhausting themselves in frantic self-exploitation to no avail, as mere idle entertainment or novelty. Rather, this movement must continue to enlarge our spheres of understanding and aesthetic experience, moving us toward a greater maturity and appreciation of the plurality and meaning of the world's many many cultures on their own terms.

*Material for this discussion is drawn from over twenty years of contact with the Indian theatre/dance world, seven years of which were spent in study and research in India and Nepal. In addition to personal observation, material has been drawn from articles in such periodicals as the Illustrated Weekly of India, Natya, Marg, Sangeet Natak, the Quarterly Journal of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, and Matribhūmi.*





# Contemporary Dance in the Philippines

Ricardo D. Trimillos

**T**he current state of dance in the Philippines is as multifaceted as the country itself, which has some sixty separate languages and a diverse range of societies. I have chosen the term "contemporary dance" to provide a proper context for the discussion of modern dance (as we commonly define the term in the West). Contemporary dance activity finds indigenous and traditional dance in familiar as well as new settings; "pure" modern dance, ballet and jazz dance; and a number of blendings of these different traditions.

**C**ontemporary dance carries with it important implications for nationalism (or perhaps nationhood) and for a Filipino identification with evolving and introduced dance forms. Further, it shows the vitality of the country—the Philippines performs, creates and draws upon modern dance in its "daily business" of being a creative and expressive culture. Modern dance in the Philippines has found a high degree of resonance that as much reflects the historical past as it portends its international future.

**H**owever, in the Philippine case, there is a difficulty in discussing dance without the theatre and music components. Calling it "dance", "dance theatre", or simply "dramatic theatre" is largely a problem of Western classification. The Philippine case suggests instead an integrated approach to theatre that is much evident in contemporary dance and that is certainly part of the major theatre traditions of Asia. Peking opera and Javanese *wayang wong* (dance theatre) are but two instances.

**F**or example, the traditional performing arts in the Philippines show that dance has long been combined with music and dramatic narrative. I wish to discuss some aspects of Filipino "dance-music-theatre" as *gesamtkunstwerk*, or

total art form. It also suggests that current dance partakes of these dimensions and of this heritage.

**G**enerally the traditional performing arts reflect a heritage that is basically Asian, but at the same time one which is quite at home with the culture and values of the Western world. The Philippines has a unique history of contact with the West; it was unified and Christianized by the Spanish, and then educated and "technologized" by the Americans. The distinctiveness of such a culture, tempered by "three hundred years in the convent and a half century in Hollywood" is certainly evident in its current dance activity.

**D**ance reflects a wide range of borrowing, innovation and invention. The borrowing, for example, could be seen in the 1971 production of the ballet *Les Sylphides* performed by the Ballet Company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. It was in the mainstream tradition of French ballet. The innovation is reflected in the performances of *Filipinescas*, a modern dance troupe which interprets traditional Philippine material. Finally, the invention is exemplified by the original choreography of Basilio, of the dance faculty at the University of the Philippines.

**S**uch is acculturation in the Philippines; it is often obvious and refreshingly unapologetic. This situation notwithstanding, contemporary dance forces the Filipino and the outside observer to identify a (sometimes difficult to define) quality of "Filipino-ness". It is the juxtaposition of the recognizably non-Filipino elements with the clearly Filipino ones that comprises one of the delights of any performance.

**R**eturning to the use of dance in dramatic narrative within a traditional context, the examples are numerous. The depiction may be general—the imitation of a heron jumping through tall grass in "Tinikling". It may also be quite literal, such as the stages for preparing rice found in "Hinal-o".

**T**he combination of dance and music for dramatic purposes occurs frequently. For instance, the *balitaw* of the Lowland Cebuano generally represents a dialogue between two lovers or would-be lovers. The sung dialogue is reinforced (or made ironic) by dance and by gesture, including a vocabulary of glances that runs the gamut from shy interest to open disdain. In the Muslim South, the dance-song entertainment *Dalling-dalling* relies upon each performer's ability to dance, sing, and improvise song texts. The performance is a dramatization of competing or quarreling lovers, that holds audience attention for hours on end.

**T**he foregoing examples can be considered "indigenously Filipino", with only a modest amount of Western influence. On the other hand, the Spanish and American colonials introduced dance genres, which provided additional outlets for Filipino creativity. The introduced genres, such as the *jota* and the *pandango* (fandango), flourished primarily among the Lowland population.

**I**n the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Spanish introduced *komedya* or *moro-moro* enjoyed great popularity. A mixture of declaimed dialogue, dance and song, the *komedya* depicts adventures of Spanish-Christian royalty encountering Arab-Muslim royalty. Inevitably romance blossoms among individuals of the opposing camps. Despite seemingly insurmountable odds, love (usually with Christianity) triumphs to save the day. The setting of the *komedya* in a fantastic, far-away land and the opportunity for exuberant costuming had great appeal for the Filipino.

**T**he *zarzuela* is a secular Spanish theatre genre which, in its Filipino transformation as *sarswela*, supplanted the *komedya* by the end of the nineteenth century. Although originally in Spanish with Spanish themes, it was quickly adapted by Filipino librettists and composers, who dealt with Filipino situations and wrote in Filipino languages. By the late Spanish and early American periods (c. 1870-1920) the *sarswela* had become a vehicle for protest against colonial oppression as well as a cry for freedom and independence. It







commented upon problems of social class (such as the work *Paglipas ng Dilim*) and celebrated patriotism (*Walang sugat*). In each production there were dances and often ball scenes, where set dance pieces in a concert setting could occur.

The major American contributions to Filipino dance were social dance genres like the Charleston and disco; vaudeville and jazz-show dance; and modern dance, which itself experiences its initial development at the same time America governed the Philippines.

While a number of dance companies and foreign dance teachers appeared in the Philippines, the most important factor for the development of modern dance was the number of Filipinos who studied in the United States and Canada. Studying modern dance (and often ballet as well) in its own cultural milieu gave them a deeper understanding of the genre. Alice Reyes as well as Basilio are such individuals who have taken the lead in modern dance in the Philippines.

Also contributing to the emergence of modern dance in the Philippines are the numerous folkloric dance troupes such as *Bayaniban* at Philippine Women's University, *Filipiniana* at the University of the Philippines and the University of the East dance group. These university-based companies endeavor to present authentic regional dance. However the dance presentations have become increasingly stylized. From the ranks of such companies have come many of the current ballet and modern dancers. Such folkloric groups brought the richness and variety of Filipino regional dance to the attention of the world and—more importantly for national unity—to the awareness of the Filipino. The folkloric groups have not drawn consciously upon the movement vocabularies of modern dance (although some have adopted the greater degree of turnout from ballet). They have used some of the technical and material aspects established by modern dance, such as mood lighting, and costumes built around the leotard.

In contrast, modern dance of the “royal lineages” of Graham, Humphrey, Limon *et al* comprise the instruction in public institutions as well as private studios. Every major university has modern dance, either as a recreational or artistic endeavor. The University of the East and the University of the Philippines continue to enjoy leading reputations. Student dancers study abroad and return to continue the development of modern dance.

At present, the most significant modern dance force is the Cultural Center of the Philippines, whose resident company is directed by Alice Reyes. She and her colleagues take the vocabulary and aesthetic of mainstream modern dance and apply it to Filipino subject matter and movement. Like the folkloric groups, this company is helping to forge a national (as opposed to regional) dance expression. Its point of departure comes from outside the Filipino experiences (from the “West”), rather than from within the country. However, intensity of individual expression and the focus upon movement intent rather than movement uniformity (which I see in Modern dance) has some parallels in the Filipino dance experience.

The “filipinisation” of modern dance has found many expressions. Gestures and movement components from regional dance and from folkloric companies are imbedded in

the modern dance idiom. The narrative tradition cited earlier uses an important Filipino historical figure, Jose Rizal, in Basilio's 1980 work “Lampara”. Tony Fabella took the Filipino ways of observing Holy Week in his piece “Semana Santa”. The Catholic tradition for most of the Philippines is as much part of cultural identity as it is religious identity. Referring once more to the Filipino penchant for narrative theatre, the more successful works in the modern idiom have been those with a strong (and Filipino) narrative basis.

I also find it significant that most dance companies (including the CCP Group) tend to blur distinctions among contemporary Western dance genres, so that modern, ballet and show dancing often appear in the same work. A signal piece in this regard is the 1980 “pinoy-rock-opera” *Rama Hari* composed by Ryan Cayabyab and choreographed by Alice Reyes. Both the music and dance were unapologetically eclectic—they generated a successful and satisfying theatre experience. In this production, I see the germination of a Filipino, presentational theatre idiom that will speak to the spirit and the dynamic of the contemporary Filipino.

Visiting artists and choreographers conduct workshops and residencies in various cultural and educational institutions. Their presence reinforces modern dance activity and keeps the resident dance community aware of current ideas and directions in the international sphere. Norman Walker, Miro Zolan, Jan Stripling and Garth Welch are representatives of the visitors to the Philippines. Another interesting direction is the exchange with other modern dance companies within Asia—Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Australia have provided input.

Outreach and touring by Philippine companies are also part of the exchange. Initially, foreign interest focused upon the folkloric groups, such as *Bayaniban*. The exoticism of their format and content was a key factor. The international attention to the dance also brought an international awareness of the Philippines as a nation. In the wake of this recognition, modern dance companies have toured both in Asia and in the West with great success. Such tours have helped to round out the picture abroad of dance in the Philippines; not only does it have rich indigenous traditions of longstanding, but it can express its cultural identity in the international *lingua franca* of modern dance.

At the present time this idiom is but one of the major components of contemporary dance in the Philippines. It is “grist for the mill”, as the country continues to develop a national dance expression—or perhaps a number of them. It exists in relatively “pure Western” forms as well as in others which have undergone change to a stronger or more explicit Filipino identity. Because it is a “neutral” tradition—not being associated with a single, specific cultural-linguistic group of the Philippines—it provides the basis for development at a pan-Filipino level. Whether at some future time, modern dance may be dismissed as part of Western imperialism is an open question. However as observers, we should remain as pragmatic as the Filipino creator—modern dance is a genre that is available *now* and is being used *now*.

The Filipino enthusiasm for modern dance (shared by its East and Southeast Asian neighbors) and the demonstrated abilities in it suggest that the dance world has completed one historical cycle. The impetus and initial movement vocabulary for modern dance grew out of the West's “discovery” of Asian dance traditions, which were then westernized. Now the established modern dance tradition of the west is being re-Asianized.



# Modern/Contemporary Dance in Britain Today

Patrick O'Meara with Robin Howard

**T**he dancers are moving, not in unison (because that was not intended) but each one just perceptibly later than the one before, a ripple of movement starting at the footlights and subsiding at the back of the stage. They are dressed, loosely, in fawn-coloured, soft material. It is like an amber wave receding into the sea after piling onto the shore. There is a sigh from the full audience in the theatre.

**T**he Company is dancing a piece by one of Britain's leading choreographers. We are in Oxford, a principal University city but also an important commercial and industrial community. There is unemployment here as there is throughout the country, but no empty seats—there was a long line at the box office in spite of the "House Full" notice for tonight's performance. They are making sure of a seat on another day. Not everybody can easily find the price of a ticket. It is not that admission is expensive. The proceeds from the full theatre will not cover costs. The theatre will not be sold out for every performance. The tour will certainly incur a loss. But it will have given great pleasure to many thousands.

**L**et's look at the audience. The average age is probably under thirty, but the spectrum is very wide. There are young children with their parents. A great many teen-agers, more girls than boys, and most of them are dressed casually. A scattering of ties and jackets, some elegant dresses and smart suits, and a group of middle-aged men in black ties. There are senior citizens in surprising numbers. Many retired people, academic and other, live in and around Oxford. Two elderly ladies sit with a group of Japanese tourists.

**T**here is wild applause for this piece. The audience is on the brink of a standing ovation. Young screams, stentorian "Bravos", heady clapping which goes on for minutes after the dancers have taken a last call and found their refuge behind the curtain from the insistence of hand on hand. It was a happy piece, sometimes comic, always tender, with the small edge of sadness which is beauty's bounty. The company danced. Choreographed by Siobhan Davis.

**I**t is an eclectic evening. The work before this was rumbustious, compelling, infectious. The music for it was derived from American square dances and street music. The choreography is by Tom Jobe, one of the most original dancers in recent years. The younger generation receives it ecstatically. The finale has been choreographed by Brooklyn born Robert Cohan, one of Britain's master choreographers. It is an elegant example of his art, beautifully costumed and magnificently danced. The music is by Bach, with an electronic interlude. The audience loves it, demanding repeated curtain calls, reluctant to leave the theatre.

## The Contemporary Dance Scene in Britain Today

**I**t would be fair to call this a typical evening of dance in Britain. Oxford is, a rather unusual city, but the scene is not very different from what will occur in many British cities and provincial towns during the Company tour. Then comes the London season with its traditionally critical audience and more demanding programmes. The repertoire is larger every year by at least six major new works. It is home-ground. Rehearsals are more easily organized, but the work is very hard. The Contemporary Dance Olympics (British) are held in London every year, and they demand everything our dancers can give.

**T**he works mentioned earlier are those of one Company, the biggest and best known, but only one of those offering modern/contemporary dance to an ever widening public in this country. Despite a discouraging economic climate and government directed cuts in subsidies by those bodies which provide the performing arts with their financial life blood, dance of this genre has become an integral part of the British entertainment scene—during the last twenty years!! It is still alive and well, but it cannot flourish until its dilemma is resolved.

## The Dilemma

**I**n relation to the crucial needs of the concert hall, namely, the theatre, opera, and the classical ballet, the subsidies required to maintain the modern/contemporary dance companies are relatively modest. When looked at on the basis of cost per head of audience, they are small indeed. The individual companies do everything in their power to support themselves. They look for donations and contributions from private and public charities and from individuals. They have not been slow to explore sponsorship possibilities. The trend is there, but the industrial base of the country is not growing, and industry is under pressure. There never was a sponsorship honeymoon for dance. There may be more sponsorships in future, but they are likely to be smaller and more selective.

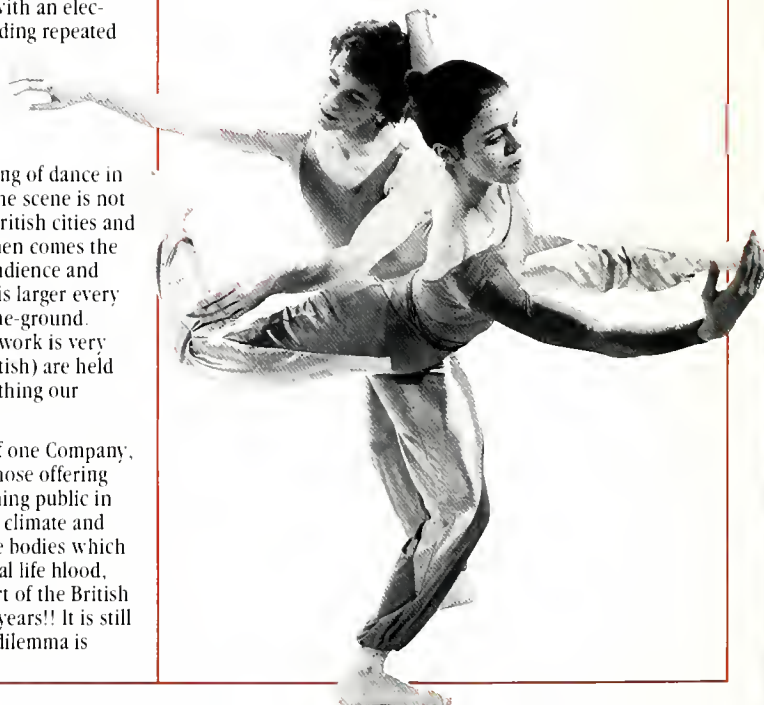
**W**e have many problems. The dance audience is mainly young and not wealthy. For this reason, seat prices have not been raised to compensate for inflation, which, while moderate at present, has been dramatic during the past ten years. Dancers are not especially well paid, and this is a serious problem. Whereas, the pay in some careers in Britain has kept pace with inflation, this is not true of dance. The lack of adequate funding for dance thus presents it with an ongoing dilemma.

## The Media

**P**ublic awareness of modern/contemporary dance in Britain has been stimulated enormously by television. "Month of Dance" programmes on the BBC attract audiences of some 10 million in the United Kingdom. For some years, the independent television networks have been paying increasing attention to dance. The various radio channels broadcast informational and educational material on dance and music. While a great deal more can still be done it is a fact that the media and the world of dance have found each other and are beginning to work together.

## Contemporary Dance As An Employer

**A**s recently as the late 1960's, there was no opportunity for employment in Contemporary Dance. Overall, dance does





not offer many jobs for performers, probably not more than about 1200 in all, spread over theatres, film and television studios, and the community, educational and social fields. Statistics are hard to come by, but it has been estimated by researchers that several hundred are now working in modern/contemporary dance. We do know that British trained graduates in Contemporary Dance regularly obtain work contracts abroad, as performers, choreographers and/or teachers, even in America.

**G**iven the limited number of vacancies for performers and choreographers and the surge in public interest in Contemporary Dance, it is clear that more of our trained dancers will make a career in private teaching. Nearly 3000 private dance teachers submit candidates for examination by the four major examining bodies in the private sector in Britain. We do know that more than half of them teach ballet only, but no statistics are available on the number who do teach Contemporary Dance in one of its acknowledged forms. Private teachers read the market rather well, and there can be little doubt that they are responding to the manifest public interest in Contemporary Dance. Since the late 1960's The Royal Ballet School and other major schools have added contemporary dance to their curriculum.

### The Origins of Modern Dance in the United Kingdom

**H**istorically, there is a strong performing tradition of dance in Britain. England, Scotland and Ireland are rich in their own stepping dances. However, the Western dance tradition in this country is very greatly indebted to European influences. The main stages and key points in the development of Western Dances are: The Chain Dance, Carole, Estampies, high Renaissance (Pavane, Galliard—danced by Englishmen at the courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I—Almain, Coranto). In the early 18th century, Steele and Addison wrote evocatively about the dance and its brilliant performers—Weaver, Tomlinson and Pemberton in particular—are well recorded in the literature.

**T**he period 1789-1820 is distinguished only by its apt description, "The Cultural Crevasse." In the last quarter of the 19th century, Swedish influence brought about an association of dance with "movement education"—the ideas of Ling imported into England by Martina Bergman Osterberg who established her Physical Training College in Hampstead in 1880. Anstey and Bedford Colleges under the leadership of Osterberg pupils later contributed importantly to the new emphasis on dance in education.

**S**hortly before the First World War, the eurhythmics of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze, with the support of Diaghilev and Nijinsky, were introduced into dance teaching. The rise of the classical ballet to its position of long unchallenged predominance in Great Britain is beyond the scope of this brief history. Isadora Duncan's "alternative form of dance" was a radical departure from all accepted conventions in dance and pointed in the direction of what came to be called "Modern Dance" in this country.

**M**ary Wigman in Leipzig, was to introduce the "Central European influence" to the British dance scene in the mid 30's. In the early years of the war Rudolf Laban, the teacher of Mary Wigman and later in Britain as a refugee from Nazi persecution, and Lisa Ullman, his close associate, were seminal figures in modern dance teaching. The Laban Centre for Movement and Dance lives on as part of Goldsmith's College, London. It has been of major influence on modern dance.

**K**urt Joos and his company with Sigurd Leeder, fled to Britain from Germany in 1934. The Joos Leeder School of Central European Dance was founded in Cambridge in 1940 and had a profound effect on British dancers and teachers. Classical ballet, for the first time, was under serious threat. After the company returned to Germany in 1947, Leeder opened his prestigious school in London. He left for Chile in 1958.



### The Rise of Contemporary Dance in Britain

**E**xciting and very different influences were making themselves known across the Atlantic, where the dance was developing in the dynamic environment of the post-wars years. The great American dancer, Martha Graham, was emerging with an original dance style and technique. She and her company visited London in 1954. They were so poorly received that they decided to omit London from their next tour in 1962, but they had made a great and lasting impression on a few people. Rohin Howard and Lord Harewood decided to present Graham at the Edinburgh Festival and to back a two week London season. Reactions this time were very different. Glowing reviews and excited audiences. The dance in Britain would never be the same again.

**D**ame Marie Rambert's Advisory Committee, after three years of experimental work reported in January 1966 that the Graham technique was suitable for British dancers, and recommended that classes of the highest artistic standard be offered in London as soon as possible. The London School of Contemporary Dance was founded by Robin Howard in 1966. He converted his Private Trust, which had financed the early work, into the London Contemporary Dance Trust, and formed the Contemporary Dance Theatre, with headquarters at the Place Theatre in London. Contemporary dance began its spectacular career there, and it was soon to be seen in many other British cities and towns. The famous Ballet Rambert became a contemporary dance company in 1966.

**I**n the 70's the Contemporary Dance Trust, with the support of the Arts Council of Great Britain, began its "residencies" in educational institutions in different parts of Britain. As with the technique, the idea was imported from America. Contemporary dance is brought to educational authorities, schools, universities and local audiences, with groups of professional dancers performing, giving demonstrations and lectures, answering questions, commenting on video material. Other companies have followed suit. To name some but not all—Extemporaty, EMMA Dance Company, Ballet Rambert, Cycles Dance Company, Janet Smith, Movable Workshops, Moving Being. The list will grow. There is great public support, and the educational authorities are enthusiastic.

**A**lthough owing so much to its American origins, contemporary dance in Britain now has its British hall-mark. A great number of talented small groups have appeared on the dance horizon during the last ten years. British choreographers are now offering work which is "sui generis".

**T**HE FIRST NIGHT in Oxford was an event in British contemporary dance, as is the glittering London gala. That both should now form part of the annual cycle of dance is a tribute to all those who have made such evenings part of the British dance scene, in a transition which has taken less than twenty years. Those with the experience of the metamorphosis, have now put that experience at the disposal of a new generation of impresarios, choreographers, performers, teachers, students, to discuss future cooperation with the authorities concerned with the performing arts, to strengthen the position of dance in education from primary to tertiary level, to ensure grant support for that education, and to promote dance in as many communities as possible.

# Dance and American Life: The Progressive Years

Neil Harris

**T**he Muse of Dance has "fallen into disrepute," wrote an American critic at the start of the twentieth century. The "mother of the arts is no longer regarded as one of the sacred nine." Eighty years ago Americans believed that dancing had been robbed of its historical place. But many were just as firmly convinced that something finally was being done to restore Terpsichore to her honorable state. A powerful and pervasive revival of interest in dance, dance of almost every kind, played an important role in the development of American culture during the twenty-five years preceding World War I.

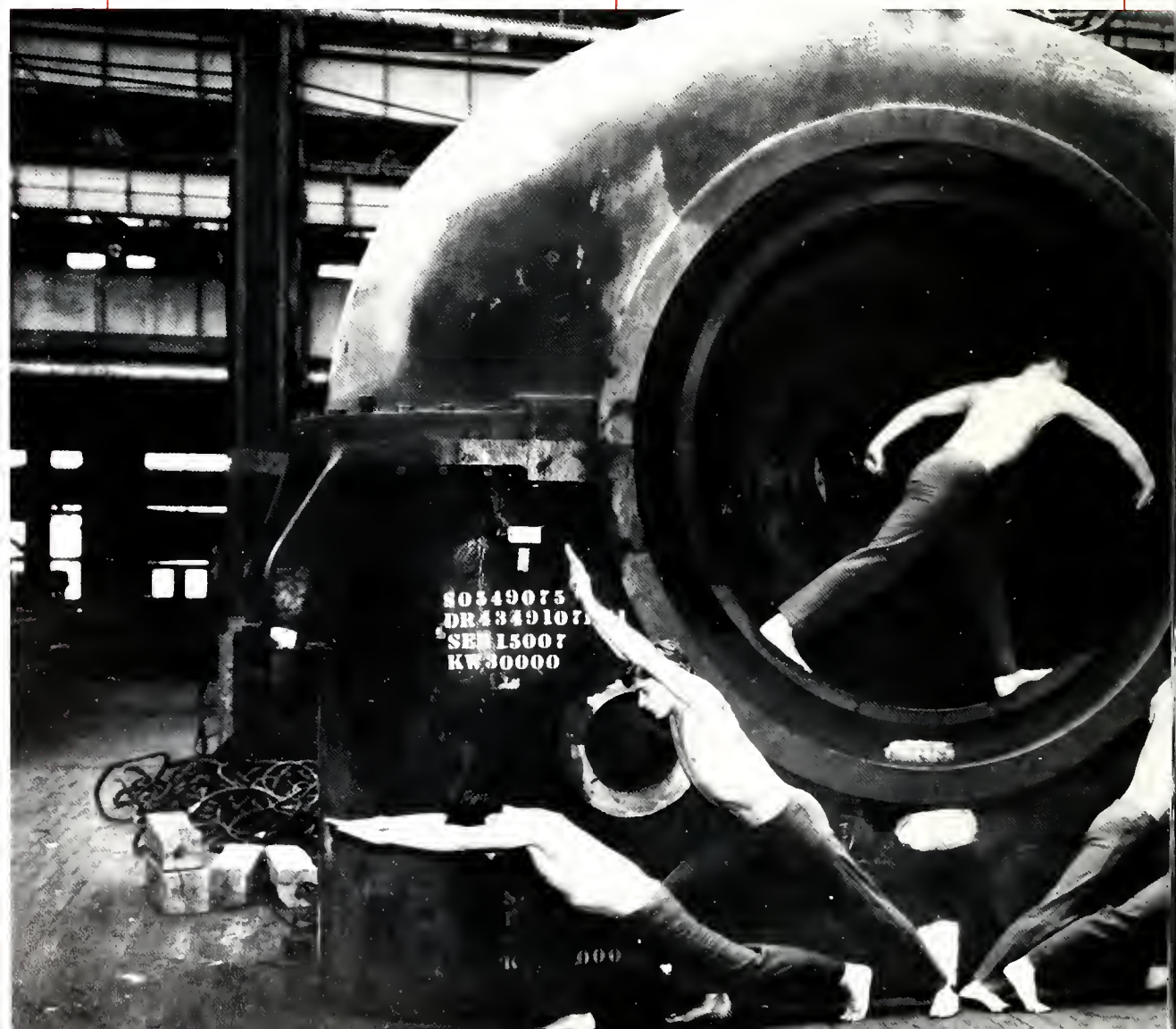
Dance, of course, had never disappeared in America, either as an art form or as an expressive instrument for popular emotion. Eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans enjoyed various kinds of folk and religious dancing, attended academies for instruction in deportment and ballroom manner, watched enthusiastically the stage exhibitions of foreign artists like Fanny Elssler and anxiously debated the immorality of chorus girls, the staple of touring extravaganzas like the famous *Black Crook*.

But as an art form it enjoyed neither the status nor the audience of acting, painting, sculpture, music, or most of the other arts. Few serious critics, schools, or bodies of theory considered dance. Until the 1890s American born and trained dancers were rare, and generally confined to minstrelsy, musical comedies, or vaudeville houses. Dance soloists were practically non-existent. Vague and sometimes pointed attributions of immorality clung to the reputation of dancers,

particularly the scantily clad troupes of ballet and opera performers. Those vibrant forms of native dance developed among American blacks, presented normally in debased form on the minstrel stage, attracted some interest. A few black performers gained European attention. But in America these dances were often considered primitive or peripheral, their appeals apparently non-intellectual and superficial.

All this underwent a sudden and irrevocable change starting in the last years of the century. By 1914 American dancers were claiming dignities and voicing ambitions that would have been impossible just twenty years earlier. These great pioneers—including Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, and Ruth St. Denis—had formidable influence and world-wide reputations. But they were part of something still larger. Even while they presided over the birth of a modern art form ethnic dancing and ragtime benefitted from new interest. Russian ballet and folk dancing attracted immensely enthusiastic audiences, while social dancing underwent an almost total revolution. Well entrenched conventions about appropriate dance movements were challenged as new settings developed to host the "manias" of social dance. The reasons for these changes lie embedded in basic features of national life.

There was, for one thing, that broad contemporary interest in evolutionary argument, the effort to explain the survival of art forms and social customs in terms of the species needs they had been meeting for millennia. Darwin, Spencer, and the American educator and psychologist,







G. Stanley Hall, were among the intellectual luminaries absorbed by the changing functions of bodily movement, including dance. Historically, dance had close relations to religious ritual and was tied to the birth of gestural expression. Philosophers, sociologists, educators, and anthropologists explored the meaning of primitive dance and urged on modern people its recovery. "Too long degraded to a mere social amusement," the dance "promises once more to become an art, a spiritual rite, a symbolical ceremony," one commentator wrote in 1911. "Young nations that cannot dance in spirit are not young. . . ." The "original expression of all psychic content is motion," Hall wrote, urging that dance be made a part of every American school curriculum. The purpose of dance, Hall insisted, was to permit man to "talk with his whole organism and thus establish a large and deeper unity of soul and body."

In the cramped, constricting world of cities and factory labor Americans and Europeans had begun to demand physical training in order to reassert health and personal vitality. Gymnastics and athletics benefitted, along with dance, from this concern with energy and appearance. Theorists of physical exercise trained a corps of teachers, established gymnasia, and promoted a culture of personal beauty. Newspapers and magazines were filled with their advertisements. The revival of the Olympic games, the growth of intercollegiate and school sports, the invention of new games, all testified to this enlarged concern for physical movement. Gesture formed a legitimate subject for both study and

spectatorial attention. The new dances, declared one religious journal in 1913, "give oxygen to the blood, vigor to the muscles, gaiety to the spirits. . . . Dancing is a gift of the gods."

Both evolutionary theory and a concern with health and vigor supported the purifying and healing vocabulary employed by art dance enthusiasts like Duncan; they invoked the spirit of Hellenistic Greece or exotic India to emphasize the liberating possibilities produced by freer body movement. But there was a popular, less self-conscious side to the new dance interests, promoted both by technological changes and marketing innovations. The increasing use of photography, a result of the growing sales of the cheap camera and the easy reproduction of pictures through half-tone methods, focused attention on dancers and dance steps in manuals and magazines. But still more significant was the coming of the motion picture. Early film goers were fed a compelling diet of bodily contortion, as the first comedies and action films were obsessed with what happened to the human body when it moved through space. Dance and athletic motions were subjects of scientific experiments in early motion picture photography. For the first time students of dance could make accurate visual records of their performance art. And public attention was riveted on how motion could become style, as actors and actresses glided, coiled, twisted, and vamped across the silver screen.

Urban entertainments, the rise of nightclubs, the popularity of new, more vigorous social dances—from the tango to the turkey trot—furnished further evidence of the cultural possibilities of dance. Composers and entertainers from John Philip Sousa to Vernon and Irene Castle, backed by the clever promotional strategies of the new entertainment impresarios, popularized new dance rituals in the years before 1914. The sale of phonographs and recordings made social dancing easier at home or at parties. Some critics likened the spread of dance to a mania, and saw it as part of a general lowering of standards. Clergymen condemned the new dances from their pulpits, and one not only bemoaned the passing of "clean dancing," but declared that "even decent walking is much too rare. One is nauseated by the spectacle of women walking in suggestive and vulgar fashion."

But there were also many defenders. Modern dance, declared the editor of *Modern Dance Magazine* in 1914, was social play, and brought social, aesthetic, and physical stimuli together. The new dances, wrote another, were making "fat people thin, old men young, and young people content with elderly partners." Above all, dance, both social dance and the new art forms pioneered by Duncan and St. Denis, was forcing on Americans a new consciousness of human sexuality and, explicitly or implicitly, a heightened concern about relations between the two sexes. It is "the one sport that brings the sexes together in an equality of execution. It makes them equal partners," declared the *Independent*, "with just that shade of difference in responsibility that keeps the male *primus inter pares*." Male dominance was not to be surrendered so easily, but some issues, at least, had been raised.

The concern with youth, the creation of new standards of beauty, the dramatic changes in fashion, the idealization of supple, athletic movements, all were part of a larger reorientation of American culture going on in the pre-War years. The "genuineness of the present intellectual awakening might be doubted if a powerful and active interest in dancing was not a part of it," Troy Kinney wrote in the *Century* of 1914. If Plato should visit America "he would find nothing to surprise him in the wide-spread popularity of the dance." As ever more details, institutions, and individuals become part of the newly rediscovered history of American dance, it is important to remember how intimate were the connections between its remarkable creativity in the early twentieth century, and the larger stirrings of an American culture, newly aware of both its power and its responsibilities.





# Tradition and Innovation in Indonesian Dance

Tilman Seebass

**D**ance and music were prominent in Indonesian culture already in prehistoric times. They have been actively pursued since then by villagers as well as at courts. As they play an important role in India, too, they could only become enhanced in Indonesia during the period of Indization from 500 to 1500 A.D. They were so deeply rooted in the various strata of the society that they flourished and developed despite the destruction of the Hindujavanese kingdoms, the spread of Islam, despite Western influence during colonization, and, in more recent time, despite the breakdown of the feudal system which had so far promoted artistic production. It is this popularity which on the one hand fosters consciousness and pride of the rich heritage of dance, and functions on the other hand as a catalyst for changes and experiments. According to my observations in Indonesia, the tenacious and faithful preservation of the tradition and the impetus towards novelty are complementary features rather than contrary ones.

**W**hile in many areas of the Indonesian archipelago trends for preservation or innovation can be identified with certain groups within the society, this is probably less the case in Java and not at all in Bali. I shall therefore use these two islands for exemplification in this essay.

**T**he richness of the dance spectrum can already be demonstrated by the various possibilities of classification. We can classify:

- according to the number of participants: dancing as an activity of a very large group or of one or a few soloists;
- according to training;
- according to the social group who "owns" or promotes a particular dance;
- according to the presence or absence of ritual connection;
- according to the psychosomatic status of the dancer.

**I** need hardly say that the type of musical ensemble and the corpus of dance gestures and movements are the most prominent criteria of all and that these two elements are intimately related to the aforementioned ones. All these criteria must be taken into account if we try to describe and understand the various dances and define them in terms of dance genres.

**L**et me give you three examples from the village sphere. The first one is the Balinese *refang*. It is performed by the unmarried women in the village as a processional group dance in the temple courtyard at the occasion of a temple feast or on the rice field in connection with the harvest rituals. But this is not the only occasion on which the women get together as a group; their association fulfills many ritual and social obligations in the village and is an important factor in the life of the community. The costume for *refang* is elaborate; a long scarf is worn around the waist and its two loose ends are waved in dancing. The movements are easy to coordinate and simple and smooth. The musical accompaniment is given by either a large *gamelan* (orchestra) or a ritual ensemble with a few instruments only. The *refang*-tune varies from place to place, but it is never used for any other purpose. As is to be expected, the connection between music and dance is loose; it consists only in the slow 4/4 meter. The piece is repeated as often as the procession requires. The cycle of dance movements is much shorter than the musical period. Other structural elements of the music are irrelevant for the choreography, but important for the creation of the appropriate festive atmosphere.

**A**nother example of a village dance is the Westjavanese *baksa*. It is performed by the fathers or uncles of the village who have a boy to be brought to the village doctor for circumcision on a particular day after harvest. Obviously there is no special group association among the participants, since they change with the occasion. The accompaniment is played

by a small ensemble. The dancers hold their boys in their arms and proceed with strong, high steps.

**T**he third example is a Balinese trance dance, *sanghyang dedari*. Normally its performance is not related to the calendar but depends on the physical or metaphysical state of the village. It is given if sickness or mishaps accumulate and in the event of acute famine or of natural catastrophes. The purpose is exorcism and purification. Two girls who have not yet reached puberty are induced to trance by a priest with the help of incense and vocal music sung by a mixed or female group of villagers. The girls become media through whom the gods announce the remedies for cleansing the village. The media walk over red-hot embers and then are lifted on the shoulders of men. While they are carried through the village, the girls dance standing on the shoulders of their bearers. At this point occasionally a male chorus becomes active, singing a textless, highly rhythmical piece. The dancers are soloists, yet not trained. Their movements are—perhaps because of their condition—not coordinated with the music.

**W**hat the examples should have made obvious is that temple-feasts, seasonal rites, exorcism, or rites of passage require dance and music and that the segment of the village society involved in this is considerable. It is not an exaggeration to say that every Balinese member of a traditional village is somehow involved in dance. Ritualistic or ceremonial aspects prevail over skill. The more accomplished participants will play a more active role and will dance at the front of the procession so that the participants who are less familiar with the event will be able to imitate them following behind. Yet aesthetical considerations are by no means absent. The lavishness of the costumes and hairdresses, solemn and pious behavior, grace and the coordination with the music are important elements of the rite—ideals each member tries to realize.

**A**t the other end of the spectrum of traditional dance are the very sophisticated dance dramas and dance pantomimes performed by highly trained soloists in courts or court-related clubs according to an elaborate choreography which has a complete vocabulary of its own. In Bali those dramas imply literacy and even some knowledge of the former language of the courts, middle-Javanese, and familiarity with the very complex musical web of a large *gamelan*. The choreography is not only based on a basic meter but also on many other aspects of rhythm as well as on melody, melodic paraphrase, and punctuation. While in ritual dance there is no stress on precision or on strict coordination—a *rajang* is not rehearsed—here the formal aesthetics and the rendering of mood and musical idea are primary concerns. The tiniest detail of a dance movement can be the subject of lengthy discussions. Hence this category of courtly dance can be compared to any of the Western forms of art dance, be it classic ballet or modern dance.

**L**et us finally consider the dance genres between the two extremes. There is e.g. the *joged*—or its Javanese equivalent *ronggeng*. A troupe of unmarried girls from seven to seventeen (in former times members of the courtly household and harem) travels through the villages and gives dance performances in which the local young males engage as partners. Each girl takes her turn in a round of dances in which the most daring villagers, one after the other, join her for a courting pair dance. The girl lures, seduces, rejects, the boys are the bold conquerors. The style of the girls is modelled after court dances, never direct or obscene, always allusive, elegant, witty, and surprisingly well coordinated with the music of the bamboo orchestra. The male partners display a more varied picture. Their dancing is more improvised and shows wide differences in experience, education, and taste. Some are elegant, some clumsy, some coarse, others controlled and subtle. The audience reacts very quickly and is unrestrained in its judgement. *Joged* is a purely social event without any ceremonial implications. It is open to all kinds of trends, be it from courts, the neighboring region, or even a disco bar.







There is a more sophisticated group of dances, also situated between court and village, but of far greater importance than *joged*: the dance dramas in their more popular versions. They come in several types and most of them share a fundamental principle of communication with the shadow play and certain forms of epic recitation, viz. the actualization of traditional values by means of dialogue. It is worthwhile to elaborate on this principle of actualization. To this day the majority of the important feasts on Bali require the recitation of sections of old-Javanese epics. For a modern Balinese old-Javanese is probably at least as remote as for an American old-English, the language of the Beowulf epos, yet those epics are very much alive for him. Whenever they are recited, the reader will sing only one line which is then translated, or paraphrased by a translator into modern Balinese. Then follows the next line performed in the same way. The same principle is used in the shadow play and dance drama. There the noble characters reveal and enunciate the old myths and heroic ideals, using an old or at least esoteric court language, the servants translate what they say for the audience and comment on it in the modern idiom of the lower classes. They reflect the feelings and thoughts of the contemporary audience. Thus old and new are brought to the audience in the forms of dialogue, paraphrase, and gloss. I have not yet found that this principle of communication is applied on a large scale in music, but it certainly is in dance. In the Balinese dance drama the heroic characters who are identified with the nobility are rendered in the most traditional, court-oriented dance style. The servants and clown figures, too, feature in many ways a traditional repertory of gestures and movements, but they enjoy much more room for improvisation, slap stick, and acrobatics; they can parody their masters or introduce new elements picked up from contemporary foreign art forms.

This may be the place to say a word about the music. Studies so far seem to indicate that in Java the size of the musical ensemble or orchestra is related to the social stratum which is promoting the dance or dramatic genre: Popular music and village music and dance tend to operate with small ensembles. The most elaborate and refined dances and dance dramas are connected with courts or state institutions. Not so in Bali: The activity in music and dance is so intense and varied that large orchestras are as much required as small ensembles. Probably, if one would relate dance and musical activity to the size of the population, Bali would appear as the epitome of Indonesia, a fact which is undoubtedly related to the old-Indonesian and Hindu-Balinese religion which both affirm dance and music. In this respect the attitudes of the Islamized societies in Indonesia are more muted.

Returning to our main concern, I would venture to say that the Balinese principle of relating past and present can help us, too, to understand some phenomena which emerged in the modern Indonesian society in regional centers and cities. Travelling, the media, and urbanization bring formerly widely separated social groups and geographical areas in contact with each other. The style of certain dance genres becomes more mixed. A prominent example are the choreographies designed in fulfillment of the title of a master of arts

by candidates at the Indonesian dance academy. Wherever I stayed I found that the problem of mixing styles is at the center of the debate and criticism among scholars, artists, and the audience or the TV spectators. It sharpens the consciousness on all sides; on the one hand it leads to a return to more authentic, purer versions of traditional genres and even to a revival of obsolete dances, on the other hand to experiments of all kinds.

**Kreasi baru**—a new creation—is a magic word in village and city people alike. Yet most often the story to be choreographed is taken from the old Ramayana, Mahabharata, or Panji tales which have been used as plots for drama for many centuries. Many of the *kreasi baru* are nothing else than actualizations of a tradition. One of the nicest I have seen was a dance pantomime where the text was new, too. Its purpose was to propagate cleanliness in order to prevent diseases. The dancers represented a cook, two flies as transmitters of infection, and a doctor; costumes, dance choreography, and musical accompaniment were traditional.

In 1983, it became obvious in the dance performances at the Balinese Dance Academy that Balinese concepts of dance had begun to mix with Javanese elements. Many Balinese objected fiercely and thought that the border line where innovation is still connected with tradition had been overstepped. If this already poses problems, one wonders what would happen if a *kreasi baru* were to combine Western ballet or jazz dance with indigenous tradition. I see two conceptual differences between modern dance in Indonesia and the West.

First, the ideal of the Indonesian dancer is depersonalization. He tries to reach the status of perfection where he is a pure vessel, or medium for the character to be represented. A modern Western solo dancer will attempt to achieve a perfect transformation of his ego into the dance movements. Second, most of our modern Western dance (and music) is not an actualization of the past—even if we use the Orpheus or Oedipus story for the plot—and therefore we may not hesitate to introduce elements of other cultures for what we intend to express. For a Balinese, however, there is still the need to recognize in any performance the patterns of his own tradition. This explains why the Balinese have so far remained relatively immune to outside influences; they first reduce foreign elements to accidentals before they integrate them into their own art. Obviously, the situation is different in the metropolitan city of Jakarta, where the dance group which participates in the American Dance Festival this year comes from. Choreographic and musical experiments in which East meets West and where one would not easily dare to classify one element as completely subjugated to the other were in Indonesia performed already in the early seventies. But even there my impression is that the Indonesians use such experiments and artistic contacts with alien styles rather as a way to becoming more sensitive to the outer world, more conscious of what they are themselves and of how much their identity depends on the own artistic tradition. This is the spirit in which they offer their contribution to the Festival.



# ADF 50th Anniversary Photographic Exhibition: "Made in America – Modern Dance Then and Now"

Suzanne Shelton

**A**t a particular moment in American history, from a particular set of circumstances, a new art form was born. We call it modern dance, a loose rubric that covers an astonishing variety of human movement, a broad range of themes and styles. Yet we mean something specific by "American modern dance."

Perhaps now, as the American Dance Festival enters its fiftieth anniversary year, we have accumulated enough perspective to survey the development of modern dance and to identify just what, if anything, American modern dance is.

The Festival has provided an important laboratory for the development of modern dance. From its beginnings at Bennington College in 1934, through the Connecticut College years, and today at Duke University, the Festival has been a microcosm of American modern dance activity. Yet when it came time to celebrate the Festival's fiftieth anniversary with a photographic exhibition covering the history of American modern dance, it became clear that the two were not entirely synonymous. Modern dance is vaster than any of its institutions, more complex than any of its single practitioners, a cultural force deeper than its component parts.

Five broad cultural themes underlay the formation and development of American modern dance. These themes, as expressed in the Festival exhibition, are dynamism, radical individualism, the American landscape, community, and the perpetual frontier.

Modern dance seemed, first and foremost, an expression of American energy. The birth of modern dance came at the turn of the Twentieth Century as American industry accelerated and cultural forms expressed the energy of a young and aggressive nation. The cultural historian, Henry Adams, descendant of American Presidents and a sagacious observer, welcomed the Twentieth Century with an essay, "The Dynamo and the Virgin," in which he asserted that "man had translated himself into a new universe which had no common scale of measurement with the old."<sup>1</sup> Adams took for his symbol of modernism the dynamo, that generator of energy which seemed at once expressive of power and force and the infinite possibilities of technical knowhow. The early American modern dancer, Ted Shawn, chose the same symbol for his 1936 "Dance of the Dynamo." For publicity photographs he posed his Men Dancers around a huge dynamo at the General Electric plant in Schenectady, New York. The dancers' flexed muscles, their thrusting poses and seriousness of purpose seemed to echo the promise of the Machine Age.

Dynamism was a concern for America's earliest modern dancers because the dance they had inherited seemed static, sadly out of step with the times. American concert dance at the turn of the Twentieth Century consisted chiefly of classical ballet in the opera houses and variety dance on the popular stage. Ballet, a foreign art form dominated by European practitioners, had become a static series of two-dimensional poses. What ballet lacked in dynamism, it tried to compensate in scale, with lavish spectacles that emphasized a pictorial approach to movement. In fact, the evolution of American dance, from imported ballet to its own idiom,

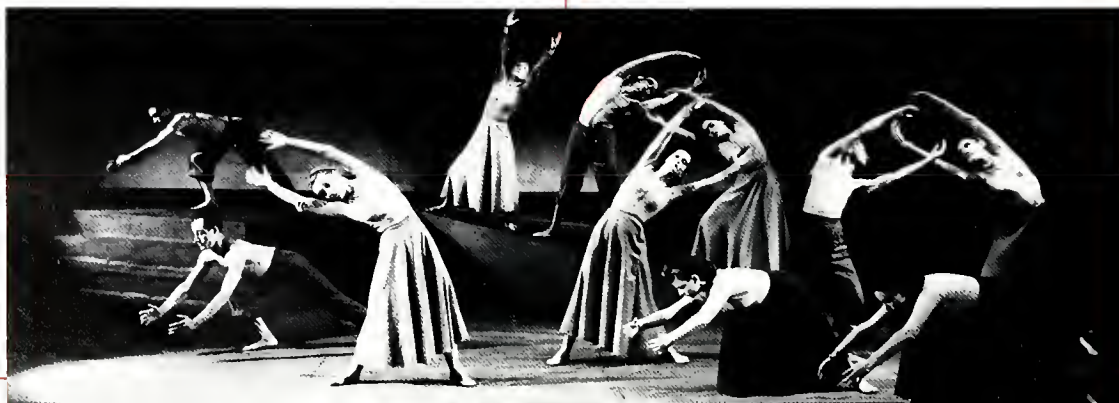
might be likened to the evolution of photography into film. America's earliest modern dancers had to find a way to get dance moving again. They needed connective tissue for their "frames" or poses. They needed a motor force, a dynamo, for their dance.

They found their energy sources in a variety of ways. The theories of Francois Delsarte taught them that human movement proceeds from the inside out, from inner motivation to outer expression. They also learned from the Desartists the importance of the spiral form, a three-dimensional movement type which is also inherently dynamic, tied to time. From the theories of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze they learned how to borrow the dynamism of musical forms as a scaffolding for movement. Through their own explorations modern dance pioneers such as Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, and Ruth St. Denis learned how to locate the source of hodyly energy, how to animate the torso (which Delsarte called the "emotional zone"), how to free the body from the constrictions of classical forms and traditional costumes, how to express personal feelings and ideas in dance.

The earliest laboratory for American modern dance was popular entertainments, especially the variety and vaudeville stage. There, "bicycle dancers," practitioners of "living pictures," "aerial dancers" suspended by wires, and "serpentine dancers" bathed in the play of colored lights, experimented with the physics of motion—gravity, spatial illusion, the interplay of form and light.

Once American dance began to move, the challenge for modern dancers was to discover a suitable language of movement. In the case of American modern dance, this meant many languages, many techniques, many styles. Basic to the notion of American modern dance was the idea that the individual is the source of dance, a radical individualism deeply ingrained in the American character. In his classic essay, "Self Reliance," Emerson urged non-conformity, and in "The American Scholar" he urged each of his countrymen to build his own world. American modern dancers responded by developing techniques out of their own bodies and themes out of their individual needs. Doris Humphrey summarized these concerns best, as she left the eclectic Denishawn training to make her own way as a modern dancer: "I felt I was dancing as everyone but myself," she wrote. "I knew something about how the Japanese moved, how the Chinese or Spanish moved, but I didn't know how I moved or what the American heritage should be."<sup>2</sup>

The American heritage, the American landscape, seemed the natural terrain for the development of modern dance. "It was imperative to find out what we were as Americans and as contemporary dancers," Humphrey wrote.<sup>3</sup> One was linked with the other. This compulsion toward self-discovery, toward cultural self-knowledge, was as old as the young country itself. Just as James Fenimore Cooper's Deerslayer stood silhouetted on a hillside, gazing across the American frontier landscape, American artists' imaginations were fired by a continent to conquer. This theme of exploration implied an individual journey into the very heart of what it means to be American. For Humphrey,





[illegible]

By Mathilde Wihr  
(Mlle. Neysa)

ever is, much that is better still. I imagine she stretched out  
down the way in an old blanket, and was busy for hours in her  
glory to find and a red and red.

The last part of the  
and from now on near the head of the point where, as I said  
my dear friend, the real thing is an old woman's head  
making the thing. I had the best of the old woman's head  
and the whole of the old woman's head and the whole of the old woman's head

[illegible]

*"Such being my opinion, I thought best to let you know it, as I have been informed by Mr. [redacted] that he has a letter from you lately, in which you say you are now at home."*

I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

was the social landscape that intrigued—the democratic

the land—Humphrey's "Day on Earth" and Graham's "Appalachian Spring" come to mind. For their fellow

American space. Freed from the strictures of ballet, moving toward freedom from the proscenium arch stage


There was room on this landscape for foreign contr

burning expressionism that sharpened American edges

self" to "society," as one historian puts it, the German moral forms were congenial to modern dancers who felt

merican modern dance, emerged as modern dancers formed groups, alliances, and institutions, and as they fo

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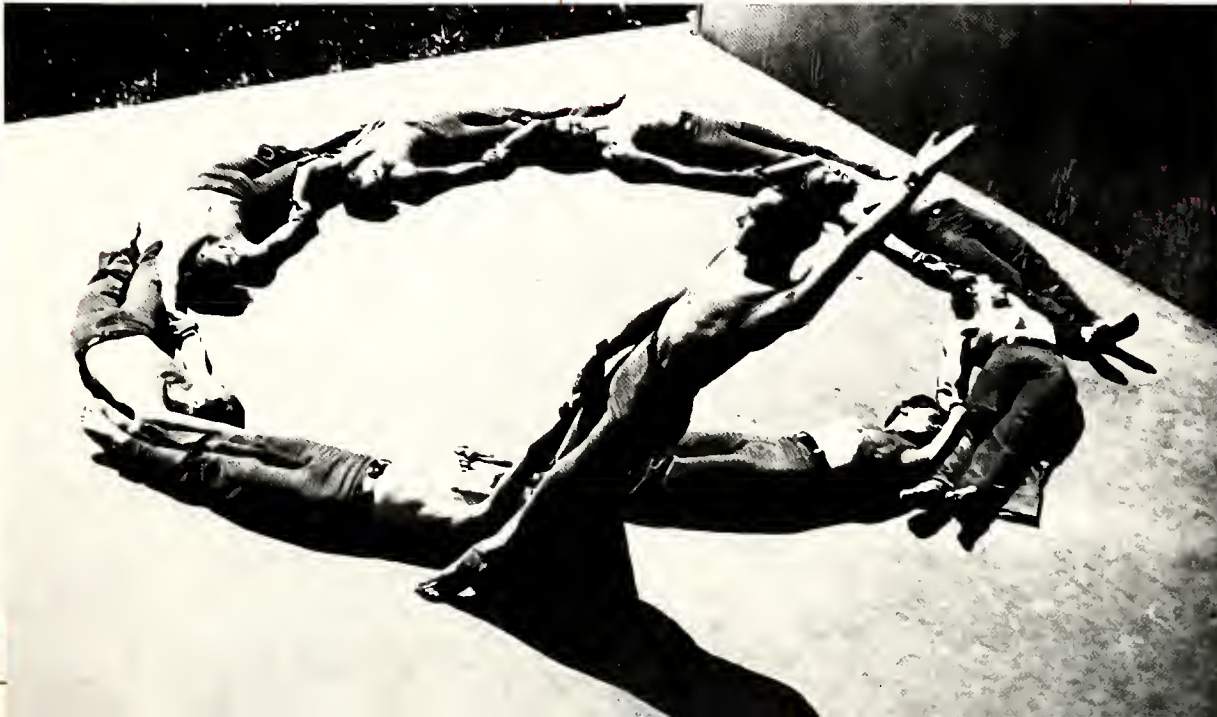
**T**here is no end, perhaps, to the history of American

<sup>1</sup>Henry Adams, "The Dynamo and the Virgin," in *The*

<sup>2</sup>Doris Humphrey, speech delivered at Julliard School of

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

100



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# Biographies

## Scholars' Biographies

**Terri J. Edelstein** is currently Director of the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in South Hadley, Massachusetts. She came to Mount Holyoke from Yale University where she was Assistant Director of Academic Programs at the Yale Center for British Art. Her publications focus on the interaction of "High Art", popular culture and contemporary culture in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. Recently, she has authored a catalogue on the mid-eighteenth-century pleasure garden, Vauxhall Gardens, proposing a political meaning for its series of paintings depicting games, plays and pastimes.

**Chito Grajo** is currently Choreographer and Artistic Director of the Philippine Folk Arts Theatre Group of the Philippine Center in New York. In 1968 he received the Jose P. Laurel Memorial Scholarship and in 1970 he received his Bachelor in Foreign Service from the Lyceum of the Philippines. His dance training includes ballet, modern, Classical Spanish, Hawaiian and Tahitian, Japanese Kabuki, Bavarian Folkdance, and Russian Folk Dance. He has worked on stage, television and films, and has performed in tours to Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, South America, the Middle East and the United States.

**Neil Harris** is Professor of American History at the University of Chicago. Educated at Columbia, Cambridge, and Harvard Universities, he teaches courses on the history of American culture, technology, architecture, and design. He has served as a member of the Board of Directors for the American Council of Learned Societies, a member of the Smithsonian Council, on the Board of Editors for the *New England Quarterly*, and a trustee of the Henry du Pont Winterthur Museum. His books include *The Artist in American Society* (1966, 1980), and *Humbug: The Art of P. T. Barnum* (1973, 1981), and he has published essays on various aspects of American written, graphic, and performing culture.

**Jon B. Higgins** is Director of the Center for the Arts and Professor of Music at Wesleyan University. He has written a study of the music of *Bharata Natyam*, South Indian classical dance, as represented in the work of the great dancer T. Balasaraswati. Dr. Higgins is best known in India as the only Westerner to have been accorded professional status as a singer of South Indian art music. A student of T. Viswanathan, he has performed widely throughout India and North America for the past twenty years, recorded several commercial albums, and received research grants for work in India from the United States Educational Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and the American Institute of Indian Studies.

**Robin Howard** served in British Scots Guards in the Second World War and was wounded with the loss of two legs in 1945. He completed the MA at Cambridge and Barrister at Law, Inner Temple. He was formerly Honorary Director of the International Service Department, British United Nations Association and Honorary Advisor to World Federation of United Nations Associations and Board member of the Martha Graham and Paul Taylor dance companies. Since 1966, Mr. Howard has served as Chairman and Director General of Contemporary Dance Trust of London, England, which controls London Contemporary Dance Theatre, London Contemporary Dance School, The Place Theatre and educational and community service units.

**Clifford Reis Jones** holds a Ph.D. degree in South Asia Regional Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, 1967. Dr. Jones has published on various aspects of Indian art history, religious ritual and performing arts, particularly in the areas of Sanskrit drama and classical dance. Dr. Jones has produced five documentary films on India's performing arts, products of extensive field study and research in India. He has taught at the University of Rochester, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and most recently at Sonoma State University. He is currently Director of the Ethnic Arts Center Theatre School.

**Adrienne L. Kaepler** is currently Curator of Oceanic Ethnology at The National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She also teaches specialized courses in dance anthropology in the University of Hawaii Music Department and in The Social Anthropology Department of Queen's University of Belfast (Northern Ireland). Ms. Kaepler has completed her B.A., M.A., Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Hawaii. She was Research Anthropologist on the staff of the Bishop Museum, in Honolulu from 1967-1980. She has done field work in Tonga (20 months), Hawaii, Taluti, Fiji, Solomon Islands, New Guinea, Japan—(short periods from 3 weeks to 3 months) on Social Structure, Dance, Music, and the Visual Arts. Her pioneering work in using linguistic analogies in the study of dance structure resulted in a Ph.D. thesis "The Structure of Tongan Dance".

**Joy S. Kasson** is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her teaching and scholarship are concerned with the interrelations between history, literature, and the arts in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America. She is the author of *Artistic Voyagers* (1982), a study of American writers and painters in Europe.

**Eigin W. Mellow**, Associate Professor of English at Duke University, studied twentieth-century British literature at the University of London where he completed the M.A. in 1958 and the Ph.D. in 1962. He has subsequently published books and articles on modern British writers. His interest in dance began when he was an undergraduate at Emory University and danced with the Atlanta Civic Ballet. He is a board member of the Chapel Hill Ballet Company and is currently engaged in research on the relationship of the ballet and modernist literature.

**Gerald E. Myers** is professor of philosophy at Queens College and the Philosophy Ph.D. Program of the City University of New York. A former secretary-treasurer of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association, Professor Myers has published numerous articles and several books. *Emotion, Philosophical Essays*, which he co-edited, appeared in the spring of this year. He has recently completed a book on the philosophy and psychology of William James, a project that was supported by a Fellowship awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. He has collaborated with Stephanie Reinhart, ADF's Associate Director, on the Festival's Humanities-and-Dance programs, these programs also providing source materials for a book on dance aesthetics which he and his wife, Martha, are currently writing.

**James L. Peacock** is an anthropologist who has had fieldwork experience in Indonesia. During 1962-63 he lived in a shantytown in Surabaya, Java while studying a proletarian drama called *Ludruk*. During 1970, he was a participant/observer of the Muslim movement, Muhammadiyah, throughout Indonesia. During 1979, summer, he did research on the mystical sect Sumarah, in Surakarta, Java.

Peacock has a B.A. from Duke University (1959) and a Ph.D. from Harvard University (1965). He is Professor and formerly Chair, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and he has also taught at Princeton University and the University of California at San Diego. During 1980-81 he held a Guggenheim fellowship in connection with All Souls College, Oxford University.

Books by Peacock include *Rites of Modernization: Symbolic and Social Aspects of Indonesian Proletarian Drama* (University of Chicago, 1968); *The Human Direction* (Prentice Hall, 1970), *Indonesia: An Anthropological Perspective* (Goodyear, 1973), *Consciousness and Change* (Oxford: Blackwell's, 1975), *Muslim Puritans* (University of California Press, 1978), and *Purifying the Faith* (Cummings, 1978).

**John F. Richards** was born in Exeter, New Hampshire. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a B.A. in History. He received an M.A. in Asian Studies from the University of California at Berkeley. This was followed by a Ph.D. in Indian history from the same institution in 1970. He was employed at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in the Departments of History and (jointly) in South Asian Studies. In 1977 he accepted a position in the Department of History at Duke University. He is currently Professor of History at Duke.

His major research and publication efforts have been in the field of Mughal or early modern Indian history (16th-18th centuries). He has published a book with Clarendon Press, Oxford, *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (1975) an edited volume, *Kingship and Authority in South Asia* and numerous articles devoted to Mughal India. He has more recently begun research and publication in the economic and environmental history of modern India, resulting in published articles on agricultural and landuse changes in India. He is currently heading a major Department of Energy funded research project to delineate landuse changes in South Asia and Southeast Asia over the past two centuries.

Professor Richards lived in India with his family for a year in 1966-67. He has since visited India, Pakistan and Nepal many times for visits of varying length. He has taught a wide range of courses on the history and civilization of this part of the world. He is presently chairman of the Indian Ocean Studies program at Duke University.

**Tillman Seebass** was born in Switzerland and studied at the universities of Basel and Heidelberg. Presently he is Associate Professor of Musicology at Duke University. His research includes the music of Indonesia, especially Bali and Lombok (publications of records, films, and a book written together with Indonesian authors) as well as Western music history, especially the Middle Ages and musical iconography.

**Suzanne Shelton** is a contributing editor to *Dance Magazine* and an Assistant Professor of American Studies and Drama at the University of Texas at Austin. Her biography of Ruth St. Denis, *Divine Dancer*, won the 1981 de la Torre Bueno Prize and was named Ambassador of Honor by Books Overseas. She has pursued an interest in Asian dance, both as a member of the United States Dance Cultural Study Team sent to the People's Republic of China in 1980, and most recently as recipient of the Indo-American Fellowship from the Council on the International Exchange of Scholars for dance research in India during 1983. Her association with the American Dance Festival began in 1971 when she attended the Critics Conference as a student; since then she has repeatedly served on the faculty of that conference as well as on the faculty of the Festival's TV Directors' Workshop.

**Allegra Fuller Snyder**, dancer and choreographer, received her BA in dance from Bennington and her MA in dance from the University of California at Los Angeles. At UCLA she currently serves as Professor of dance and Director of the graduate program in Dance Ethnology. She is also the Coordinator of the Ethnic Arts Inter-Collegiate Inter-Disciplinary Program. From 1974-1980 she served as the Chairman of the Dance Department.

She has performed with the New York City Ballet, and was choreographer for the Joffrey Ballet. Of her many films "Bayanihan", a documentary on Philippine Dance, received the award for Best Folkloric Documentary at the Bilbao Spain Film Festival and the Golden Eagle Award. Another film, "Baroque Dance, 1675-1725" was funded with the help of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Most recently, she completed a documentary film on Mary Wigman funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Ms. Snyder has also served as seminar director for an NEH sponsored summer seminar program on Asian Performing Arts at UCLA. She has served as the dance film editor of Film News and has contributed articles to *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Perspectives*, *Impulse*, *Ethnomusicology*, and other publications for dance and film related projects.

From 1968-1972 Ms. Snyder served as a member of the NEA dance panel and in 1974 as a member of the dance panel of the California Arts Commission. In the summer of 1973 she served as the co-director of the first month long dance/television workshop of the American Dance Festival. Ms. Snyder is listed in the *World Who's Who of Women in Education*.

**Ricardo D. Trimilins** is professor in ethnomusicology and head of the Ethnomusicology Section of the Music Department, University of Hawaii; this Section includes dance ethnology. His major research has been in the Philippines among Catholic and Muslim populations and court and theatre performing arts of Japan (including dance); his theoretical interests include the arts and ethnic identity, the process of improvisation, and the interaction of the performing arts with language.

His major performance medium is the Japanese koto, with special attention to contemporary works for the instrument. He has served as consultant in ethnomusicology for the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Mara Institute (Malaysia), the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and the East-West Center (Honolulu).

He completed his Ph.D. at the University of California, Los Angeles and has also studied at the University of Cologne, the Ateneo de Manila, and the University of Hawaii.

## Performers' Biographies

**Ballet Philippines** is the resident dance company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Established in 1970, with roots in modern dance, Ballet Philippines performs classical and modern dances and works that reflect the Filipino culture. The company's music and choreography are often based on legends in Philippine folk literature, with themes such as forbidden love and the caste system, and the universality of worship. Under the artistic direction of co-founder Alice Reyes, the company displays its energy and devotion to the art with a natural grace and practiced technique. From its dramatic works to its abstract dances, Ballet Philippines expresses discipline, beauty, and balance, and a delicate style and charm.

**Lee Connor** has been involved in all aspects of dance as a choreographer, performer and teacher. A faculty member of the University of New Mexico and at the American Dance Festival, he is Founder/Director of Danzantes, a dance collective in Albuquerque. As a movement specialist, he teaches at the Laban Institute of Movement Studies and, in addition, had performed in the Workshop, an improvisational company directed by Daniel Nagrin, and choreographed and performed in duo concert with Lorn McDougal.

**Dance Indonesia** is the performing dance company of the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, an art education institution which was

founded in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1970. Dance Indonesia explores the forms and concepts of beauty based in the traditional dances of its country. The dance group incorporates into its performances such diverse traditions as the rhythmical body movements that accompany poetry recitation and the unique hand clapping, chest smacking, and finger snapping of Aceh; the martial arts postures and moves of Minangkabau; and the chanted praises to Allah of Indang dance. Dance Indonesia presents the wealth and value of the Indonesian culture and displays the universal basic elements of dance.

**Chuck Davis** serves as artistic director of both the Chuck Davis Dance Company and the African-American Dance Ensemble (Company-in-Residence at the American Dance Festival). Mr. Davis has developed company repertoires of African Dance which trace its heritage from West Africa to the shores of the Harlem River in New York City, employing traditional movement with the authentic use of drums and reed instruments. In addition, he is an accomplished movement specialist and master of African dance, touring worldwide with a schedule that includes performances and demonstrations in schools, prisons and community centers.

**Ralf Haze's** list of credits include former membership in the companies of Martha Graham, Kazuko Hirabayashi, Joyce Trisler, Eleo Pomare and Fred Benjamin, as well as performances in the Broadway productions of *The Wiz* and *Your Arms Too Short To Box With God*. He has served as choreographer for the company of *Ain't Misbehavin'*; assistant choreographer for the Alvin Alley American Dance Theater (creating "Blueshift" and "The Stack-up"); and faculty member of the School of the Performing Arts and Juillard in New York City, Connecticut College in New London, SUNY at Purchase, and the American Dance Festival.

**London Contemporary Dance Theatre** was England's first modern dance company, making its hometown debut in 1969. The company sprang into life due to the vision, determination, and financial support of dance enthusiast Robin Howard. It is a dance troupe which possesses an adventurous attitude of exploration in modern dance trends. The dancers display their technical prowess and powerful moves with a special lyrical quality. Their strength and spirit on stage are controlled by their singular style of coolness and balance. Their dance pieces range from uplifting to witty to menacing in character, from solo performances to swirling ensembles. London Contemporary Dance Theatre exhibits a special vitality, combining the elements of color, fabric, light, sound, and movement into exciting dance performances.

**Marleen Pennison** has been presenting her choreographed short stories in New York and nationally since 1975 with her company, Marleen Pennison and Dancers. Her compelling narratives embrace characters and events drawn from such diverse sources as memories of her native New Orleans to personalities from the waning days of Vaudeville. She has been noted for her adeptness as a scenarist and director as well as actress/dancer, and in 1981, she was chosen to participate in the Emerging Generation program at the American Dance Festival. Her talent for realism extends through the range of her work—from painful emotional scenarios to her slice-of-life vignettes.

**The Uday Shankar India Culture Centre Dance Company** presents dances of beauty and harmony in movement, as developed by the legendary Indian dancer and choreographer Uday Shankar. Shankar's family has served as inheritor of his technique and passes this heritage to India's young dancers. Based in Calcutta, the dance group uses movements which are simple yet elegant, expressing Indian folklore and other themes. It operates on the principle that anything from life and experience can be transformed into dancing. The company's dancing is known for its lively spirit, its playful humor, its ceremonial drama, and its sensuous mystique. This Hindu group not only treats the audience to enchanting dance performances but to dazzling multicolored costumes and exotic instrumental music.



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Jilana Van Meter, Intern  
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Deborah Mauldin, Apprentice  
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## School

Jan Dunn, Assistant Dean  
Julia Wray, Academic Liaison with Duke University  
Six Week School Faculty: Shelly Berg, Isa Partsch-Bergsohn, Lee Connor, Chuck Davis, Nada Diachenko, Ralf Haze, Betty Jones, Sharon Kinney, Mark Litvin, Peggy Lyman, Martha Partridge, Don Redlich, Ernestine Stodelle, Linda Tarnay, Jaclynn Villamil  
Jazz Workshop: Alvin McDuffie  
Young Dancers Workshop Faculty: Shelly Berg, Director; Ralf Haze, Martha Partridge  
Musicians: Tigger Benford, Richard Fields, David Friedman, Natalie Gilbert, John Hanks, Sarah Noll  
Faculty Assistants: Gail Corbin, Mishele Mennet, Dawn Moir

## National Professional Services/Community Services

*Center for the Study of Professional Dance Training and Education*  
Martha Myers, Director  
*Dance Update for Professional Dance Educators*  
*Body Therapy Workshop*: Elaine Summers, Helene Closset, Nada Diachenko, Faculty  
*Dance Medicine Seminar*: Martha Myers and Robert C. Bartlett, Co-Directors  
Faculty: Irene Dowd, William F. Garrett, William Hamilton, William Hardaker, Peter Marshall, Lyle Michel, Marika Molnar, Thomas Novelle, Elia E. Villaneuva  
*Community Services Program*  
Chuck Davis, Artistic Director  
*Dances and Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance*  
Gerald Myers and Stephanie K. Reinhart, Project Directors  
*Dance Critics Conference*  
Camille Hardy, Director  
*Young Choreographers and Composers in Residence Program*  
Linda Tarnay, Co-Director  
Stanley Walden, Co-Director  
*Technical Assistance Project (TAP)*  
Mark Litvin, Project Director  
Donna Brady, Project Coordinator  
*International Choreographers/Dancers in Residence Workshop*  
Linda Tarnay, Director  
*Made in America: Modern Dance Then and Now*  
(photography exhibition)  
Suzanne Shelton, Curator  
Don Vlack, Exhibition Designer

## ADF/Japan

Faculty: Ralf Haze, Betty Jones, Bella Lewitzky, Martha Myers, Ruby Shang, Kei Takei  
Performing Companies: Crowsnest, Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians

## The Association for the American Dance Festival Board of Directors

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# The American Dance Festival History

**T**he American Dance Festival is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, a milestone which coincides with a worldwide explosion of modern dance. The American Dance Festival is responding to this surge of dance enthusiasm with its 1984 performance series: The World's First International Modern Dance Festival.

This historic occasion follows five decades of commitment to modern dance. In July, 1934, at the American Dance Festival's inception in Bennington, Vermont, the art was known only to a small number of modern dance fans. Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Hanya Holm were the devoted artists who taught, experimented, and performed on the Bennington College campus. Today, we recognize them as the Festival's founders and their dances as landmarks in twentieth century art.

Over the years, modern dance and the American Dance Festival developed together. As the Festival settled in its new home at Connecticut College, New London, in 1948, a new generation of choreographers emerged: Merce Cunningham, José Limon, Erick Hawkins, Alwin Nikolais, Paul Taylor, and Alvin Ailey. Their Festival premieres are among the modern day dance classics.

In the past two decades, the Festival continued to give important public exposure to young artists, artists who are renowned today in the dance world: Pilobolus, Laura Dean, Twyla Tharp, Meredith Monk, Marleen Pennison, Bill T. Jones, and Charles Moulton. In addition to exciting performances, the Festival implemented new programs, among them, the "Emerging Generation" series, the Dance Critics Conference, and workshops for dance professionals.

Now, the American Dance Festival reveals the international influence of American modern dance by presenting not only the modern dance artists of this country, but also eight foreign dance companies from two other continents. And the Festival has commissioned 11 premieres for this special golden anniversary season. From its 50th anniversary, the American Dance Festival looks forward to new performances and programs, and the next half-century of exciting modern dance.





# 1984 ADF Performance Schedule/ 50th Anniversary

## First International Modern Dance Festival

### June 10-July 21, 1984

#### Sunday, June 10 (Opening Night)

8:00 pm Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award to Hanya Holm\*

#### Monday, June 11

8:00 pm Uday Shankar India Culture Centre Dance Company\*\*

#### Tuesday, June 12

5:00 pm Humanities Project: "Dances & Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance"—INDIA\*\*\*  
8:00 pm Uday Shankar India Culture Centre Dance Company\*\*

#### Wednesday, June 13

8:00 pm Uday Shankar India Culture Centre Dance Company\*\*

#### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, June 14-16

8:00 pm Ballet Philippines\*

#### Sunday, June 17

5:00 pm Humanities Project: "Dances & Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance"—PHILIPPINES\*\*\*

#### Monday, June 18

8:00 pm Susan Buirge Project (France)\*\*

#### Tuesday, June 19

8:00 pm Eiko & Koma\*\*

#### Wednesday, June 20

5:00 pm Humanities Project: "Dances & Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance"—GREAT BRITAIN\*\*\*  
8:00 pm Eiko & Koma\*\*

#### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, June 21-23

8:00 pm London Contemporary Dance Theatre\*

#### Sunday, June 24

5:00 pm Humanities Project: "Dances & Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance"—USA\*\*\*

#### Monday, June 25

8:00 pm Soloists From India: Bharat Sharma & Astad Deboo\*\* (Shared Performances)

#### Tuesday & Wednesday, June 26 & 27

8:00 pm Marleen Pennison and Dancers\*\*

#### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, June 28-30

8:00 pm Merce Cunningham Dance Company\*

#### Sunday, July 1

5:00 pm Humanities Project: "Dances & Their People: The Aesthetic and Cultural Significance of Modern Dance"—INDONESIA\*\*\*

#### Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, July 2-4

8:00 pm Dance Indonesia from the Jakarta Institute of the Arts\*\*

#### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, July 5-7

8:00 pm Twyla Tharp Dance\*

#### Monday, July 9

8:00 pm Chuck Davis Dance Company with the African-American Dance Ensemble\*

#### Tuesday & Wednesday, July 10 & 11

8:00 pm Premieres of 3 Young Choreographers & 3 Composers in Residence\*

#### Thursday & Friday, July 12 & 13

8:00 pm Pilobolus Dance Theatre\*

#### Saturday, July 14

Late Afternoon Ruby Shang & Company, Dancers\*\*\*  
8:00 pm Pilobolus Dance Theatre\*

#### Sunday, July 15

Late Afternoon Ruby Shang & Company, Dancers\*\*\*

#### Monday & Tuesday, July 16 & 17

8:00 pm Groupe Emile Dubois (France)\*\*

#### Wednesday, July 18

8:00 pm ADF Faculty Performance\*\*

#### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, July 19-21

8:00 pm Nikolais Dance Theatre\*

\* These performances will be held at Page Auditorium  
\*\* These Performances will be held at Reynolds Theatre  
\*\*\* These performances will be held outdoors.

## 1984 ADF Schedule of School and Workshops Durham, North Carolina June 9-July 20, 1984

Six Week School	June 9 to July 20
Jazz Workshop	June 10 to June 22
Young Dancers Workshop (ages 13-16)	June 23 to July 20
Dance Update Workshop	June 17 to June 24
Body Therapy Workshop	June 25 to June 28
Dance Medicine Seminar	June 28 to July 1
Dance Critics' Conference	June 16 to July 6
Young Choreographers/ Composers in Residence Program	June 13 to July 12
International Choreographers/ Dancers in Residence Workshop/Conference	June 10 to June 30
ADF 50th Anniversary Photographic Exhibition: "Made in America: Modern Dance Then and Now" (at the Duke University Art Museum)	June 11 to July 21

# THE DANCE

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